(d) The Extra-Departmental Agents are not entitled to wages for the period of absence from duty, on leave or otherwise, under the existing EDA (Conduct & Service) Rules, 1964. Therefore, no payment of wages was made to Extra Departmental Agents for their period of absence as this would tantamount to giving duty pay.

(e) and (f) A few representations have been received in the matter. Some officials have also to Court, and the matter is currently subjudice.

Doubling of Rail Line between Seoraphuli and Tarakeswar

355. SHRI ANIL BASU : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that line utilisation capacity of Seoraphuli and Tarakeswar Section have reached on saturated point;

(b) if so, whether Government have since considered for construction of double line between this section;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) A techno-economic survey was conducted for augmentation of line capacity of Seoraphuli–Tarakeswar section and this section was not recommended for doubling. However, some EMU trains are being augmented from 9 to 10 coaches and there is likelihood of increasing EMU train formation futher by 2 coaches, thereby bringing about a significant increase in passenger carrying capacity of trains. There is hardly any goods traffic on this section.

Telephone Connections in Barddhaman

356. SHRI BALAI CHANDRA RAY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether several persons have got their names registered for telephone connections at Rasulpur under Barddhaman Telephone Exchange but they are not getting connection for a long time;

(b) if so, whether any steps have been taken to provide telephone connections to all waiting list persons of Rasulpur; and

(c) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Yes, Sir. The number of prospective Registered subscribers in the Waiting List of Rasulpur Telephone Exchange is 83 only as on 30.6.97

(b) Yes Sir.

(c) The present Telephone Exchange at Rasulpur with a capacity of 368 lines is having 319 working connections, and the same is planned to be replaced by 1000 C-DOT to cater the existing waiting list and the future demands of telephone connection during the current financial year.

Telecommunication services in Tripura and West Bengal

357. SHRI BAJU BAN RIYAN :
DR. RAM CHANDRA DOME :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have taken any steps to improve the functioning of Telecommunication services in Tripura and in the District of Birbhum, West Bengal; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The following steps have been taken to improve the services :-

(A) TRIPURA :

(i) There are 47 electronic exchanges, 44 exchanges are having STD facility. The remaining three exchanges viz. Hmanpui, Kanchanpur and Manubazar will be provided STD facility during 97-98.

(ii) The capacity of existing telephone exchange at Agartala is being further augmented by additional 4000 lines.

(iii) 55% villages are provided with public telephones. The remaining villages will be provided with telephone facility during the 9th Five Year Plan.